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ABSTRACT

In 1990, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) included a Trial State Assessment (TSA); for the first time in NAEP's history, voluntary state-by-state assessments were made. In 1994, TSA was expanded to include non-public school students. The 1994 reading assessment considered students' proficiency in situations that involved reading different kinds of materials for different purposes. The fourth-grade assessment measured two global purposes for reading--reading for literary experience and reading to gain information. The state of Idaho did not meet minimum school participation guidelines for public schools; therefore only results for Idaho's nonpublic schools are reported. This report describes the reading proficiency of Idaho fourth-graders in nonpublic schools and compares their overall performance to students in nonpublic schools of the West region of the United States and the nation (using data from the NAEP national assessments). The distribution of reading results and reading achievement level results are provided for subpopulations of students (race/ethnicity, type of location, parents, educational level, and gender). Reading proficiency and achievement of non-public school students are separately reported and compared to public school students. To provide a context for the assessment data, participating students, their reading teachers, and principals completed questionnaires which focused on: policies and practices related to reading (time for instructional activities and instructional resources for reading); delivery of reading instruction (instructional materials and activities, workbooks/ worksheets/writing, discussion and group activities, time to read, reading and use of libraries, assessing progress in reading); reading instructors (preparation, experience and professional development); students' home support for literacy (reading outside of school and in the home and hours of television watched per day). The average reading proficiency of nonpublic school fourth-grade students in Idaho on the NAEP

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reading scale was 218 compared to a score of 231 for nonpublic school students nationwide. (SR)

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NAEP 1994 READING STATE REPORT FOR IDAHO

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NAEP is a congressionally mandated project of the National Center for Education Statistics, the U.S. Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible, by law, for carrying out the NAEP project through competitive awards to qualified organizations. NAEP reports directly to the Commissioner, who is also responsible for providing continuing reviews, including validation studies and solicitation of public comment, on NAEP's conduct and usefulness.

In 1988, Congress established the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) to formulate policy guidelines for NAEP. The Board is responsible for selecting the subject areas to be assessed from among those included in the National Education Goals; for setting appropriate student performance levels; for developing assessment objectives and test specifications through a national consensus approach; for designing the assessment methodology; for developing guidelines for reporting and disseminating NAEP results; for developing standards and procedures for interstate, regional, and national comparisons; for determining the appropriateness of test items and ensuring they are free from bias; and for taking actions to improve the form and use of the National Assessment.

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NAEP 1994 READING STATE REPORT

for

IDAHO

December 1995

Office of Educational Research and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education

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with the National Center for Education Statistics

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Overview

For over 25 years, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has been the nation's primary indicator of student achievement, reporting on what students know and can do in various school subject areas at grades 4, 8, and 12. With legislation passed by Congress in 1988, NAEP's mission of providing dependable and comprehensive information about educational progress in the United States was expanded to involve a voluntary state-by-state assessment on a trial basis.

Consequently, the 1990 NAEP program included a Trial State Assessment Program in which public school students in 37 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories were assessed in eighth-grade mathematics.[1] Building on this initial effort, the 1992 NAEP program included a Trial State Assessment Program in fourth-grade reading and fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics, with public school students assessed in 41 states, the District of Columbia, and two territories.[2]

The continuation of NAEP's Trial State Assessment Program in 1994 was authorized by additional legislation that enlarged the state-by-state assessment to include nonpublic school students:

> *The National Assessment shall conduct in 1994 . . . a trial reading assessment for the 4th grade, in states that wish to participate, with the purpose of determining whether such assessments yield valid and reliable State representative data. (Section 406(i)(2)(C)(i) of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended by Pub. L. 103 — 33 (U.S.C. 1221e-l(a)(2)(B)(iii)))*

> *The National Assessment shall include in each sample assessment . . . students in public and private schools in a manner that ensures comparability with the national sample. (Section 406(i)(2)(c)(i) of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended by Pub. L. 103 — 33 (U.S.C.1221e — (a)(2)(B)(iii)))*

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[1] For a summary of the 1990 program, see Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Eugene H. Owen, and Gary W. Phillips. *The State of Mathematics Achievement. NAEP's 1990 Assessment of the Nation and the Trial Assessment of the States.* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1991).

[2] For a summary of the 1992 assessment of reading, see Ina V.S. Mullis, Jay R. Campbell, and Alan E. Farstrup. The *NAEP 1992 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States.* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993). For a summary of the 1992 assessment of mathematics, see Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Eugene H. Owen, and Gary W. Phillips. *NAEP 1992 Mathematics Report Card for the Nation and the States.* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993).

In addition to the state assessment program in reading at grade 4, the 1994 NAEP involved national assessments of reading, geography, and history at grades 4, 8, and 12.

The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program was conducted in February 1994 with the following 44 participants:

Alabama	Louisiana	North Dakota
Arizona	Maine	Pennsylvania
Arkansas	Maryland	Rhode Island
California	Massachusetts	South Carolina
Colorado	*Michigan*	Tennessee
Connecticut	Minnesota	Texas
Delaware	Mississippi	Utah
District of Columbia	Missouri	Virginia
Florida	Montana	Washington
Georgia	Nebraska	West Virginia
Hawaii	New Hampshire	Wisconsin
Idaho	New Jersey	Wyoming
Indiana	New Mexico	
Iowa	New York	Guam
Kentucky	North Carolina	DoDEA

Jurisdictions in italics — Idaho and Michigan — did not meet minimum school participation guidelines for public schools. Another jurisdiction, the District of Columbia withdrew from the Trial State Assessment Program after the data collection phase. Therefore, public school results for these three jurisdictions are not reported.

For the 1994 Trial State Assessment in reading, a combined sample of approximately 2800 public and nonpublic school students was assessed in most jurisdictions. The samples were carefully designed to represent the fourth-grade populations in the states or jurisdictions. For jurisdictions that participated in the 1992 Trial State Assessment Program, contractor staff monitored 25 percent of public school sessions and 50 percent of nonpublic school sessions. For jurisdictions that did not participate in 1992, contractor staff monitored 50 percent of both public and nonpublic school sessions. Monitoring efforts were part of a quality assurance program designed to ensure that sessions were conducted uniformly.

The 1992 Trial State and National Assessment programs in reading were based on a framework developed through a national consensus process that was set forth by law and called for "active participation of teachers, curriculum specialists, subject matter specialists, local school administrators, parents and members of the general public" (Pub. L. 100-297, Part C, 1988).[3] This same framework also served as the basis of the 1994 Trial State and National Assessment programs in reading. The process of developing the framework was carried out in late 1989 and early 1990 by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) under contract from the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) which is responsible for formulating policy for NAEP, including developing assessment objectives and test specifications. The framework development process included input from a wide range of people in the fields of reading and assessment, such as school teachers, administrators, and state coordinators of reading and reading assessment. After thorough discussion and some amendment, the framework was adopted by NAGB in March 1990. An overview of the reading framework is presented in *NAEP 1994 Reading Report Card*.

The 1994 fourth-grade Trial State and National Assessments in reading consisted of eight sections or blocks, each 25 minutes in length. All fourth-grade students in the assessment were required to complete two blocks. Each block contained a passage or set of passages and a combination of constructed-response and multiple-choice questions. Passages selected for the assessment were drawn from authentic texts used by students in typical reading situations. Complete stories, articles, or sections of textbooks were used, rather than excerpts or abridgements. The type of question — constructed-response or multiple-choice — was determined by the objective being measured. In addition, the constructed-response questions were of two types: *short constructed-response* questions required students to respond to a question in a few words or a few sentences, while *extended constructed-response* questions required students to respond to a question in a paragraph or more.

This Report

As was stated earlier, Idaho did not meet minimum school participation guidelines for public schools. The initial school participation rate fell below the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) established criteria of 70 percent. The nonpublic school sample in Idaho did meet NCES established guidelines. Therefore, only results for Idaho's nonpublic school (Catholic schools and other religious and private schools) are reported. Nonpublic school results for the nation and the West region are also presented.

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[3] NAEP Reading Consensus Project. *Reading Framework for the 1992 and 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, U.S. Department of Education, 1994).

Guidelines for Analysis and Reporting

This report describes reading performance for nonpublic school fourth graders and compares the results to similar national and regional results. Because the percentages of students and their average proficiencies are based on samples — rather than on the entire population of nonpublic school fourth graders in a jurisdiction — the numbers reported are necessarily *estimates*. As such, they are subject to a measure of uncertainty, reflected in the *standard error* of the estimate. When the percentages or average proficiencies for Idaho are compared to national or regional results, it is essential to take the standard error into account, rather than to rely solely on observed similarities or differences. Therefore, the comparisons discussed in this report are based on *statistical tests* that consider both the magnitude of the difference between the means or percentages and the standard errors of those statistics.

The statistical tests determine whether the evidence — based on the data from the groups in the *sample* — is strong enough to conclude that the means or percentages are really different for those groups in the *population*. If the evidence is strong (i.e., the difference is statistically significant), the report describes the group means or percentages as being different (e.g., one group performed *higher than or lower than* another group) — regardless of whether or not the sample means or sample percentages appear to be about the same. If the evidence is not sufficiently strong (i.e., the difference is not statistically significant), the means or percentages are described as being *not significantly different* — again, regardless of whether the sample means or sample percentages appear to be about the same or widely discrepant. The reader is cautioned to rely on the results of the statistical tests — rather than on the apparent magnitude of the difference between sample means or percentages — to determine whether those sample differences are likely to represent actual differences between the groups in the population.

The results for the nation and the West region of the country are based on the nationally and regionally representative samples of students who were assessed in January through March as part of the national NAEP program. Using the national and regional results from the 1994 national NAEP program is necessary because of the voluntary nature of the Trial State Assessment Program. Since not every state participated in the program, the aggregated data across states did not necessarily provide representative national or regional results.

Specific details on the samples and analysis procedures used can be found in the *Technical Report of the 1994 NAEP Trial State Assessment Program in Reading*.[4]

The United States has been divided into four regions for the purpose of this report: Northeast, Southeast, Central, and West. States included in each region are shown in Figure 1. All 50 states and the District of Columbia are listed, with the participants in the 1994 Trial State Assessment Program highlighted in boldface type. Guam and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) Overseas Schools were not assigned to a region. Further, students attending schools in the part of Virginia that is included in the Washington, DC, metropolitan statistical area are included in the Northeast regional results; students attending schools in the remainder of the state are included in the Southeast regional results.

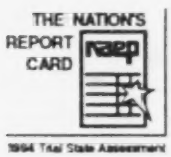

FIGURE 1

Regions of the Country

NORTHEAST	SOUTHEAST	CENTRAL	WEST
Connecticut	**Alabama**	*Illinois*	*Alaska*
Delaware	**Arkansas**	**Indiana**	**Arizona**
District of Columbia	**Florida**	**Iowa**	**California**
Maine	**Georgia**	*Kansas*	**Colorado**
Maryland	**Kentucky**	**Michigan**	**Hawaii**
Massachusetts	**Louisiana**	**Minnesota**	**Idaho**
New Hampshire	**Mississippi**	**Missouri**	**Montana**
New Jersey	**North Carolina**	**Nebraska**	*Nevada*
New York	**South Carolina**	**North Dakota**	**New Mexico**
Pennsylvania	**Tennessee**	*Ohio*	*Oklahoma*
Rhode Island	**Virginia**	*South Dakota*	*Oregon*
Vermont	**West Virginia**	**Wisconsin**	**Texas**
Virginia			**Utah**
			Washington
			Wyoming

Note: Part of Virginia (near metropolitan Washington, DC) is included in the Northeast region, and the rest of Virginia is in the Southeast region.

[4] *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading*. (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995)

Profile of Idaho

Fourth-Grade School and Student Characteristics

Table 1 provides a profile of the demographic characteristics of the fourth-grade students attending nonpublic schools in Idaho, the West region, and the nation. This profile is based on data collected from the students and schools participating in the 1994 Trial State and National Assessments. Regional and national results are based on National Assessment samples, not on aggregate Trial State Assessment samples. Since not every state participated in the program, the aggregated data across the state did not necessarily provide representative national or regional results.

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

TABLE 1

Profile of 1994 Nonpublic School Fourth-Grade Students in Idaho, the West Region, and the Nation

Demographic Subgroups	Idaho	West	Nation
Race/Ethnicity			
White	90 (5.3)	61 (8.2)	76 (3.8)
Black	0 (0.0)	3 (1.5)	8 (2.9)
Hispanic	6 (3.3)	26 (6.3)	11 (1.6)
Asian	1 (0.3)	3 (0.8)	2 (0.5)
Pacific Islander	0 (0.0)	3 (1.5)	1 (0.4)
American Indian	3 (2.3)	3 (2.3)	1 (0.6)
Type of Location			
Central City	14 (15.0)		46 (4.6)
Urban Fringe/Large Town	41 (18.6)		47 (4.6)
Rural/Small Town	45 (20.8)		7 (2.7)
Parents' Education			
Graduated college	47 (2.1)	53 (6.5)	55 (2.5)
Some education after high school	8 (4.0)	3 (1.1)	7 (0.8)
Graduated high school	14 (5.3)	9 (2.2)	9 (1.0)
Did not finish high school	2 (1.8)	3 (2.4)	2 (0.6)
I don't know	30 (5.0)	32 (3.8)	28 (1.8)
Gender			
Male	56 (5.4)	55 (5.5)	50 (1.7)
Female	44 (5.4)	45 (5.5)	50 (1.7)

School sample size is insufficient to permit reliable regional results for Type of Location.

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference.

The percentages for Race/Ethnicity may not add to 100 percent because some students categorized themselves as "Other."

Schools and Students Assessed

Table 2 summarizes participation data for Idaho sampled nonpublic schools and students for the 1994 Trial State Assessment.[5] For nonpublic schools, the weighted **school** participation rate after substitution in 1994 was 89 percent, which means that the fourth-grade students in this sample were **directly** representative of 89 percent of all the fourth-grade nonpublic school students in Idaho. In each school, a random sample of students was selected to participate in the assessment. In 1994, as estimated by the sample, less than 1 percent of the nonpublic school population was classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP), while 14 percent in nonpublic schools had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). An IEP is a plan, written for a student who has been determined to be eligible for special education, that typically sets forth goals and objectives for the student and describes a program of activities and/or related services necessary to achieve the goals and objectives. Students with disabilities may be categorized as IEP.

Schools were permitted to exclude certain students from the assessment, provided that certain criteria were met. To be excluded, a student had to be categorized as Limited English Proficient or had to have an Individualized Education Plan *and* (in either case) be judged incapable of participating in the assessment. The intent was to assess all selected students; therefore, all selected students who were capable of participating in the assessment should have been assessed. However schools were allowed to exclude those students who, in the judgment of school staff, could not meaningfully participate. The NAEP guidelines for exclusion are intended to ensure uniformity of exclusion criteria from school to school. Note that some LEP and IEP students were deemed eligible to participate and were not excluded from the assessment. The students in Idaho who were excluded from the assessment because they were categorized as LEP or had an IEP represented less than 1 percent of the nonpublic school population in grade 4.

[5] For a detailed discussion of the NCES guidelines for sample participation, see *School and Student Participation Rates for the Reading Assessment and Guidelines for Participation* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1994); or see Appendix B of the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995).

The weighted **student** participation rate was 96 percent for nonpublic schools. This means that the sample of fourth-grade students who took part in the assessment was **directly** representative of 96 percent of the **eligible** nonpublic school student population in **participating** schools in Idaho (that is, all students from the population represented by the participating schools, minus those students excluded from the assessment).

The **overall** weighted response rate (school rate times student rate) was 86 percent for nonpublic schools. This means that the sample of students who participated in the assessment was **directly** representative of 86 percent of the **eligible** fourth-grade nonpublic school population in Idaho.

Following standard practice in survey research, the results presented in this report were produced using calculations that incorporate adjustments for the non-participating schools and students. Hence, the final results derived from the sample provide estimates of the reading proficiency and achievement for the **full** population of eligible fourth-grade nonpublic school students in Idaho. However, these non-participation adjustments may not adequately compensate for the missing sample schools and students in instances where nonparticipation rates are large. For details of the non-response weighting adjustment procedures, see the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading*.

In order to guard against potential non-participation bias in published results, NCES has established minimum participation levels necessary for the publication of 1994 Trial State Assessment results. NCES also established additional guidelines that address ways in which non-participation bias could be introduced into a jurisdiction's published results. In addition to meeting the overall school participation rate criteria, Idaho's nonpublic school sample has also met these additional NCES guidelines. (Idaho's public school sample did not meet NCES guidelines.)

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

TABLE 2

Profile of the Fourth-Grade Nonpublic School Population Assessed in Idaho - 1994 Trial State Assessment in Reading

SCHOOL PARTICIPATION	
Weighted school participation rate before substitution	89%
Weighted school participation rate after substitution	89%
Number of schools originally sampled	8
Number of schools not eligible	0
Number of schools in original sample participating	7
Number of substitute schools provided	1
Number of substitute schools participating	0
Total number of participating schools	7
STUDENT PARTICIPATION	
Weighted student participation rate after makeups	96%
Number of students selected to participate in the assessment	98
Number of students withdrawn from the assessment	0
Percentage of students who were of Limited English Proficiency	0%
Percentage of students excluded from the assessment due to Limited English Proficiency	0%
Percentage of students who had an Individualized Education Plan	14%
Percentage of students excluded from the assessment due to Individualized Education Plan status	0%
Number of students to be assessed	98
Number of students assessed	94
Overall weighted response rate	86%

Idaho's weighted public school participation rate before substitution was less than 70 percent. Therefore, in accord with NCES-established guidelines, Idaho's public school results are not reported.

Students' Reading Proficiency

In 1994, a renewed emphasis was placed on national education goals when Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and enacted the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Pub. L. 103-227). A concern for higher academic standards is evident in the ESEA's efforts to provide programs to improve America's schools. *Goals 2000* reasserts the importance of establishing and meeting rigorous goals in the education of our nation's students: *All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy.* Reading ability can be viewed as an enabling skill for reaching these goals. Therefore, concern about attaining these goals and, more specifically, about the reading abilities of our nation's students has increased because recent NAEP results appear to indicate that many students of all ages have difficulty reading thoughtfully.[6]

The *NAEP Reading Framework* underlying both the 1992 and 1994 assessments views reading as a dynamic, complex interaction between and among the reader, the text, and the context of the reading experience. Readers, for example, bring to the reading process their prior knowledge about the topic, their reasons for reading, their individual reading skills and strategies, and their understanding of differences in text structures.[7]

The texts used in the NAEP reading assessment are representative of common reading demands. Because reading performance varies in response to texts and contexts, the NAEP assessment measured students' abilities to read different types of materials for different purposes. The materials were selected from naturally occurring sources that are typically available to children in and out of school. Students in grade 4 were asked to respond to literary and informational texts, corresponding with the two purposes for reading assessed at grade 4 — reading for literary experience and reading to gain information.

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[6] Ina V.S. Mullis, Jay R. Campbell, and Alan E. Farstrup. The *NAEP 1992 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States.* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1993); Ina V.S. Mullis, John A. Dossey, Jay R. Campbell, Claudia A. Gentile, Christine O'Sullivan, and Andrew S. Latham. *NAEP 1992 Trends in Academic Progress.* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1994).

[7] J.A. Langer. "The Process of Understanding: Reading for Literary and Informational Purposes," in *Research in the Teaching of English, 24.* (1990). pp. 229-260; NAEP Reading Consensus Project. *Reading Framework for the 1992 and 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress.* (Washington, DC: National Assessment Governing Board, U.S. Department of Education, 1994).

Reading for literary experience typically involves the reader in vicarious experiences through the story's characters or considerations of how the author explores human events. Literary texts include short stories, poems, and folktales that engage the reader in a variety of ways, not the least of which is reading for fun. Reading to gain information may involve seeking to learn about a topic or to search for specific information. Informational texts include selections from textbooks, magazines, encyclopedias, and other written sources whose purpose is to increase the reader's knowledge. Differences between narrative and informational text typically require students to use different skills and strategies.

In addition to having fourth graders demonstrate their ability to read for two different purposes, the assessment asked students to build, extend, and examine meaning from four stances or types of interactions with the text.

Initial Understanding

Students are asked to provide the overall or general meaning of the selection. This includes first impressions, main points, or themes.

Developing an Interpretation

Students are asked to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences and connections. This includes making connections between cause and effect, analyzing the motives of characters, and drawing conclusions.

Personal Response

Students are asked to make explicit connections between the ideas in the text and their own background knowledge and experiences. This includes comparing story characters with themselves or people they know, or indicating whether they found a passage useful or interesting.

Critical Stance

Students are asked to consider the text objectively. This includes identifying how the author crafted a text with stylistic devices such as mood and tone.

These stances are not considered hierarchical or completely independent of each other. Rather, they are viewed as recursive processes that take place throughout reading and represent different dimensions of the reader's understanding. They provide a frame for generating assessment questions and considering student performance at all levels. All students at all levels should be able to respond to reading selections from all of these stances. What varies with students' developmental and proficiency levels is the amount of prompting or support needed to elicit their responses, the complexity of the texts to which they can respond, and the sophistication of their answers.

The 1994 Trial State Assessment Program marks the first time that nonpublic school students were assessed at the state level. Therefore, separate nonpublic school results are reported for Idaho. Trend results are not presented for nonpublic school students because they were not included in the 1992 samples. Table 3 shows the distribution of overall reading proficiency for the nonpublic school population in Idaho, the West region, and the nation.

1994, Nonpublic School Students

The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade students in nonpublic schools in Idaho was 218. This average was not significantly different from* that of nonpublic school students across the nation (231).

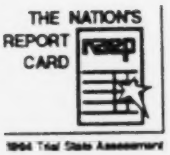

TABLE 3

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Students, Nonpublic Schools

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
1994 Nonpublic						
Idaho	218(9.9)	169(19.7)	196(19.6)	222(8.7)	244(10.8)	264(4.2)
West	223(6.2)!	175(11.0)!	201(7.4)!	224(6.1)!	249(5.9)!	269(5.0)!
Nation	231(2.5)	188(4.2)	211(2.5)	233(2.3)	254(1.9)	272(2.7)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference.

* Although the difference may appear large, recall that "significance" here refers to "statistical significance." (See the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading* for a further discussion.)

Table 4 presents proficiency by purpose for reading for the nonpublic school population.

1994, Nonpublic School Students

The proficiency of nonpublic school students in Idaho in reading for literary experience (214) was not significantly different from* that of students across the nation (233).

Similarly, in reading to gain information, the proficiency of Idaho's nonpublic school students (223) did not differ significantly from* that of students across the nation (229).

TABLE 4

Distribution of Reading Proficiency for Fourth-Grade Students According to Purpose for Reading, Nonpublic Schools

	Average Proficiency	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	90th Percentile
Reading for Literary Experience						
1994 Nonpublic						
Idaho	214(14.5)	141(45.9)	195(19.0)	222(11.8)	247(8.1)	266(13.1)
West	225(6.2)!	177(14.6)	203(5.6)!	226(4.6)!	251(6.1)!	272(5.1)!
Nation	233(2.5)	189(4.7)	212(3.1)	234(2.1)	256(2.9)	275(1.8)
Reading to Gain Information						
1994 Nonpublic						
Idaho	223(5.5)	172(8.6)	204(6.0)	226(4.6)	247(7.5)	267(5.3)
West	221(6.3)!	172(8.8)!	197(8.5)!	222(7.0)!	247(4.2)!	269(4.2)!
Nation	229(2.6)	183(7.3)	207(3.0)	230(3.1)	253(2.6)	273(2.8)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference.

* Although the difference may appear large, recall that "significance" here refers to "statistical significance." (See the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading* for a further discussion.)

Students' Reading Achievement

The most recent reauthorization of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) continues the Board's responsibilities to set policy for NAEP and to "develop appropriate student achievement levels for each age and grade in subject areas tested" (Pub. L. 103-382). As a result, students' reading proficiencies presented in the previous section can be viewed in the context of established goals for performance. This report next presents results based on the National Assessment Governing Board's goals for students' achievement on the NAEP reading scale.[8]

Achievement goals are determined through collective judgments about how students *should* perform. These judgments are associated with specific points on the NAEP scale that serve to identify boundaries between levels of achievement for each grade — Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. Performance at the Basic level denotes partial mastery of the knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work. The central level, called Proficient, represents solid academic performance. Students reaching this level demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter. Performance at the Advanced level signifies superior performance beyond proficient grade-level mastery. In this report, the percentage of students attaining the three achievement levels are presented for the 1994 assessments.

Definitions of the three levels of reading achievement are given in Figure 2. Examples of questions at the achievement levels are also provided. The reading passages which accompany these questions can be found in Appendix A. It should be noted that constructed-response questions occur at all levels of reading achievement.

[8] The *NAEP 1994 Reading Report Card* describes the process of gathering expert judgments about Basic, Proficient, and Advanced performance — as defined by NAGB policy — on each reading item, combining the various judgments on the various items and mapping them onto the scale, and setting the scale score cutpoints for reporting purposes based on these levels.

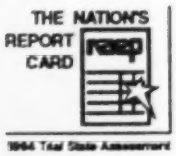

FIGURE 2

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4

The following achievement level descriptions focus on the interaction of the reader, the text, and the context. They provide some specific examples of reading behaviors that should be familiar to most readers of this document. The specific examples are not inclusive; their purpose is to help clarify and differentiate what readers performing at each achievement level should be able to do. While a number of other reading achievement indicators exist at every level, space and efficiency preclude an exhaustive listing. The achievement levels are cumulative from Basic to Proficient to Advanced. One level builds on the previous levels such that knowledge at the Proficient level presumes mastery of the Basic level, and knowledge at the Advanced level presumes mastery of both the Basic and Proficient levels.

BASIC LEVEL (208)	Fourth-grade students performing at the **Basic level** *should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read.* When reading texts appropriate for fourth graders, *they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences (and extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences).*

For example, when reading **literary text**, Basic-level students should be able to tell what the story is generally about — providing details to support their understanding — and be able to connect aspects of the stories to their own experiences.

When reading **informational text,** Basic-level fourth graders should be able to tell what the selection is generally about or identify the purpose for reading it, provide details to support their understanding, and connect ideas from the text to their background knowledge and experiences.

PROFICIENT LEVEL (238)	Fourth-grade students performing at the **Proficient level** *should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information.* When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, *they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear.*

Specifically, when reading **literary text,** Proficient-level fourth graders should be able to summarize the story, draw conclusions about the characters or plot, and recognize relationships such as cause and effect.

When reading **informational text**, Proficient-level students should be able to summarize the information and identify the author's intent or purpose. They should be able to draw reasonable conclusions from the text, recognize relationships such as cause and effect or similarities and differences, and identify the meaning of the selections's key concepts.

ADVANCED LEVEL (268)	Fourth-grade students performing at the **Advanced level** *should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose and use literary devices.* When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, *they should be able to judge texts critically and, in general, give thorough answers that indicate careful thought.*

Specifically, when reading **literary text,** Advanced-level students should be able to make generalizations about the point of the story and extend its meaning by integrating personal and other reading experiences with the ideas suggested by the text. They should be able to identify literary devices such as figurative language.

When reading **informational text,** Advanced-level fourth graders should be able to explain the author's intent by using supporting material from the text. They should be able to make critical judgments of the text (including its form and content) and explain their judgments clearly.

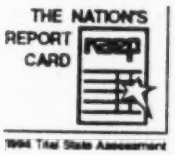

FIGURE 2 (continued)

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4

The following questions were selected as examples of the types of questions that students at each of the three achievement levels can respond to effectively. The example questions were selected from the 1992 or 1994 NAEP reading assessments. These questions are based on the stories "Sybil Sounds the Alarm" and "Hungry Spider and the Turtle," which are shown in their entirety in Appendix A. "Sybil Sounds the Alarm" is a fictional account of a historical event that describes the courage of a young colonial girl in riding her horse to warn of the approaching British army. "Hungry Spider and the Turtle" is a fable that presents a humorous portrayal of two characters and the jokes they play on each other.

For the multiple-choice questions, the correct answer is marked with an asterisk. For the constructed-response questions, a description of acceptable answers is provided. Also shown are the national overall percent correct and the percent correct for the students performing within the interval of the indicated level. Conditional percentages for students within the Advanced achievement level interval are not presented, however, because of small sample size.

Samples of student responses to these and other constructed-response questions in the NAEP reading assessment appear in the *Reading Assessment Redesigned*[9] report, which provides an in-depth look at the assessment materials and tasks. Also, a presentation of sample student responses can be found in the *1994 NAEP Reading Report Card.*

BASIC LEVEL Example Question		*Sybil Sounds the Alarm*	
Sybil's father thought that she A. was obedient but forgetful * B. was courageous and a good rider C. could lead the troops against the British D. could easily become angry			
1992 Overall Percentage Correct		1992 Conditional Percentage Correct for Basic Interval	
Nation	71 (1.4)	Nation	75 (2.4)

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[9] J.A. Langer, J.R. Campbell, S.B. Neuman, I.V.S. Mullis, H.R. Persky, and P.L. Donahue. *Reading Assessment Redesigned.* (Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 1995).

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD naep 1994 Trial State Assessment

FIGURE 2 (continued)

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4

BASIC LEVEL Example Question	*Hungry Spider and the Turtle*

Who do you think would make a better friend, Spider or Turtle? Explain why.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Acceptable responses indicated which character would make a better friend and provided appropriate evidence from the story in support of the selection.

1994 Overall Percentage Correct		1994 Conditional Percentage Acceptable for Basic Interval	
Nation	62 (1.4)	Nation	68 (2.3)

PROFICIENT LEVEL Example Question	*Sybil Sounds the Alarm*

The information about the statue and stamp helps to show that

* A. people today recognize and respect Sybil's bravery
B. people were surprised that George Washington honored
C. the author included minor detail
D. heroes are honored more now than they were then

1992 Overall Percentage Correct		1992 Conditional Percentage Correct for Proficient Interval	
Nation	62 (1.5)	Nation	87 (3.4)

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD naep 1994 Trial State Assessment

FIGURE 2 (continued)

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4

PROFICIENT LEVEL Example Question	*Hungry Spider and the Turtle*

What do Turtle's actions at Spider's house tell you about Turtle?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Acceptable responses provided a description of Turtle that is consistent with the traits portrayed by the character in a specific part of the story.

1994 Overall Percentage Acceptable		1994 Conditional Percentage Acceptable for Proficient Interval	
Nation	41 (1.4)	Nation	64 (3.0)

ADVANCED LEVEL Example Question	*Sybil Sounds the Alarm*

How does the author show the excitement and danger of Sybil's ride?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Acceptable responses described a specific element of the author's portrayal of Sybil that contributed to the story's atmosphere and tone.

1992 Overall Percentage Acceptable		1992 Conditional Percentage Acceptable for Advanced Interval	
Nation	44 (1.7)	Nation	83 (4.9)

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

FIGURE 2 (continued)

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4

ADVANCED LEVEL Example Question	*Hungry Spider and the Turtle*

Think about Spider and Turtle in the story. Pick someone you know, have read about, or have seen in the movies or on television and explain how that person is like either Spider or Turtle.

Responses that were rated as *Essential or Better* demonstrated adequate understanding of the character of Spider or Turtle by providing any story-supported character trait and relating or linking that trait to a real-worldperson or character.

1994 Overall Percentage Essential or Better		1994 Conditional Percentage Essential or Better for Advanced Interval	
Nation	29 (1.3)	Nation	73 (8.6)

Reading Achievement of Nonpublic School Students

Table 5 provides the percentage of fourth-grade students at or above each achievement level for the nonpublic school.

1994, Nonpublic School Students

The percentage of nonpublic school students in Idaho who were at or above the Proficient level (33 percent) did not differ significantly from* that of students across the nation (43 percent).

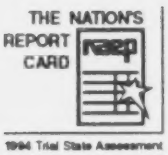

TABLE 5

Levels of Fourth-Grade Students' Reading Achievement, Nonpublic Schools

	At or Above Advanced	At or Above Proficient	At or Above Basic	Below Basic
1994 Nonpublic				
Idaho	7(3.7)	33(8.0)	68(10.1)	32(10.1)
West	11(3.2)†	36(6.2)†	69(7.7)†	31(7.7)†
Nation	13(1.8)	43(3.0)	77(2.4)	23(2.4)

The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. It can be said with about 95 percent confidence that, for each population of interest, the value for the entire population is within 2 standard errors of the estimate for the sample. In comparing two estimates, one must use the standard error of the difference.

* Although the difference may appear large, recall that "significance" here refers to "statistical significance." (See the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1994 Trial State Assessment Program in Reading* for a further discussion.)

APPENDIX A

Reading Stimuli

This appendix contains replications of two of the eight reading passages used as the stimuli at grade 4.

SYBIL SOUNDS THE ALARM

by Drollene P. Brown

A red sky at night does not usually cause wonder. But on the evening of April 26, 1777, the residents of Ludingtons' Mills were concerned. The crimson glow was in the east, not from the west where the sun was setting.

The Ludington family sat at supper, each one glancing now and again toward the eastern window. Sybil, at sixteen the oldest of eight children, could read the question in her mother's worried eyes. Would Henry Ludington have to go away again? As commander of the only colonial army regiment between Danbury, Connecticut, and Peekskill, New York, Sybil's father did not have much time to be with his family.

Thudding hooves in the yard abruptly ended their meal. The colonel pushed back his chair and strode to the door. Although Sybil followed him with her eyes, she dutifully began to help her sister Rebecca clear the table.

The girls were washing dishes when their father burst back into the room with a courier at his side.

"Here, Seth," said the colonel, "sit you down and have some supper. Rebecca, see to our weary friend."

Sybil, glancing over her shoulder, saw that the stranger was no older than she. A familiar flame of indignation burned her cheeks. Being a girl kept her from being a soldier!

Across the room, her parents were talking together in low tones. Her father's voice rose.

"Sybil, leave the dishes and come here," he said.

Obeying quickly, she overheard her father as he again spoke to her mother.

"Abigail, she is a skilled rider. It is Sybil who has trained Star, and the horse will obey her like no other."

"That red glow in the sky," Colonel Ludington said, turning now to his daughter, "is from Danbury. It's been burned by British raiders. There are about two thousand Redcoats, and they're heading for Ridgefield. Someone must tell our men that the lull in the fighting is over; they will have to leave their families and crops again."

"I'll go! Star and I can do it!" Sybil exclaimed. She faced her mother. "Star is sure of foot, and will carry me safely."

"There are dangers other than slippery paths," her mother said, softly. "Outlaws or deserters or Tories or even British soldiers may be met. You must be wary in a way that Star cannot."

A lump rose in Sybil's throat. "I can do it," she declared.

Without another word, Abigail Ludington turned to fetch a woolen cape to protect her daughter from the wind and rain. One of the boys was sent to saddle Star, and Sybil was soon ready. When she had swung up on her sturdy horse, the colonel placed a stick in her hand.

As though reciting an oath, she repeated her father's directions: "Go south by the river, then along Horse

Pond Road to Mohopac Pond. From there, turn right to Red Mills, then go north to Stormville." The colonel stood back and saluted. She was off!

At the first few isolated houses, windows or doors flew open as she approached. She shouted her message and rode on. By the time she reached the first hamlet, all was dark. There were many small houses there at the edge of Shaw's Road, but everyone was in bed. Lights had not flared up at the sound of Star's hoofbeats. Sybil had not anticipated this. Biting her lower lip, she pulled Star to a halt. After considering for a moment, she nudged the horse forward, and riding up to one cottage after another, beat on each door with her stick.

"Look at the sky!" she shouted. "Danbury's burning! All men muster at Ludingtons'!"

At each village or cluster of houses, she repeated the cry. When lights began to shine and people were yelling and moving about, she would spur her horse onward. Before she and Star melted into the night, the village bells would be pealing out the alarm.

Paths were slippery with mud and wet stones, and the terrain was often hilly and wooded. Sybil's ears strained for sounds of other riders who might try to steal her horse or stop her mission. Twice she pulled Star off the path while unknown riders passed within a few feet. Both times, her fright dried her mouth and made her hands tremble.

By the time they reached Stormville, Star had stumbled several times, and Sybil's voice was almost gone. The town's call to arms was sounding as they turned homeward. Covered with mud, tired beyond belief, Sybil could barely stay on Star's back when they rode into their yard. She had ridden more than thirty miles that night.

In a daze, she saw the red sky in the east. It was the dawn. Several hundred men were milling about. She had roused them in time, and Ludington's regiment marched out to join the Connecticut militia in routing the British at Ridgefield, driving them back to their ships on Long Island Sound.

Afterward, General George Washington made a personal visit to Ludingtons' Mills to thank Sybil for her courageous deed. Statesman Alexander Hamilton wrote her a letter of praise.

Two centuries later visitors to the area of Patterson, New York, can still follow Sybil's route. A statue of Sybil on horseback stands at Lake Gleneida in Carmel, New York, and people in that area know well the heroism of Sybil Ludington. In 1978, a commemorative postage stamp was issued in her honor, bringing national attention to the heroic young girl who rode for independence.

From *Cobblestone's* September, 1983, issue: "Patriotic Tales of the American Revolution." Copyright 1983, Cobblestone Publishing Inc., Peterborough, NH 03548. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

HUNGRY SPIDER AND THE TURTLE

by Harold Courlander and George Herzog

Spider was a hungry one, he always wanted to eat. Everybody in Ashanti knew about his appetite. He was greedy, too, and always wanted more than his share of things. So people steered clear of Spider.

But one day, a stranger came to Spider's habitation out in the back country. His name was Turtle. Turtle was a long way from his home. He had been walking all day in the hot sun, and he was tired and hungry. So Spider had to invite Turtle into his house and offer him something to eat. He hated to do it, but if he didn't extend hospitality to a tired traveler it would get back around the countryside and people would soon be talking about Spider behind his back.

So he said to Turtle:

"There is water at the spring for you to wash your feet in. Follow the trail and you'll get there. I'll get the dinner ready."

Turtle turned and waddled down to the spring with a gourd bowl as fast as he could. He dipped some water from the spring and carefully washed his feet in it. Then he waddled back up the trail to the house. But the trail was dusty. By the time Turtle got back to the house his feet were covered with dirt again.

Spider had the food all set out. It was steaming, and the smell of it made Turtle's mouth water. He hadn't eaten since sunrise. Spider looked disapprovingly at Turtle's feet.

"Your feet are awfully dirty," he said. "Don't you think you ought to wash them before you start to eat?"

Turtle looked at his feet. He was ashamed, they were so dirty. So he turned around and waddled as fast as he could down to the spring again. He dipped some water out of the spring with the gourd bowl and carefully washed himself. Then he scurried as fast as he could back to the house. But it takes a turtle a while to get anywhere. When he came into the house Spider was already eating.

"Excellent meal, isn't it?" Spider said. He looked at Turtle's feet with disapproval. "Hm, aren't you going to wash yourself?"

Turtle looked down at his feet. In his hurry to get back he had stirred up a lot of dust, and his feet were covered with it again.

"I washed them," he said. "I washed them twice. It's your dusty trail that does it."

"Oh," Spider said, "so you are abusing my house now!" He took a big mouthful of food and chewed it up, looking very hurt.

"No," Turtle said, sniffing the food. "I was just explaining."

"Well, run along and wash up so we can get on with the eating," Spider said.

Turtle looked. The food was already half gone and Spider was eating as fast as he could.

Turtle spun around and hurried down to the spring. He dipped up some water in the gourd bowl and splashed it over his feet. Then he scrambled back to the house. This time he didn't go on the trail, though, but on the grass and through the bushes. It took him a little longer, but he didn't get dust all over his feet. When he got to the house he found Spider licking his lips.

"Ah, what a fine meal we had!" Spider said.

Turtle looked in the dish. Everything was gone. Even the smell was gone. Turtle was very hungry. But he said nothing. He smiled.

"Yes, it was very good," he said. "You are certainly good to travelers in your village. If you are ever in my country you may be assured of a welcome."

"It's nothing," Spider said. "Nothing at all."

Turtle went away. He didn't tell other people about the affair at Spider's house. He was quiet about his experience there.

But one day many months later Spider was a long distance from home and he found himself in Turtle's country. He found Turtle at the shore of the lake getting a sunbath.

"Ah, friend Spider, you are far from your village," Turtle said. "Will you have something to eat with me?"

"Yes, that is the way it is when a person is far from home — generosity merits generosity," Spider said hungrily.

"Wait here on the shore and I'll go below and prepare the food," Turtle said. He slipped into the water and went down to the bottom of the lake. When he got there he set out the food to eat. Then he came to the top of the water and said to Spider, who was sitting impatiently on the shore, "All right, everything is ready. Let's go down and eat." He put his head under water and swam down.

Spider was famished. He jumped into the water to follow Turtle. But Spider was very light. He floated. He splashed and splashed, kicked and kicked, but he stayed right there on top of the water. For a long time he tried to get down where Turtle was eating, but nothing happened.

After a while Turtle came up, licking his lips.

What's the matter, aren't you hungry?" he said. "The food is very good. Better hurry." And he went down again.

Spider made one more desperate try, but he just floated. Then he had an idea. He went back to the shore, picked up pebbles and put them in his pockets of his jacket. He put so many pebbles in his pockets that he became very heavy. He was so heavy he could hardly walk. Then he jumped into the water again, and this time he sank to the bottom, where Turtle was eating. The food was half gone. Spider was very hungry. He was just reaching for the food when Turtle said politely:

"Excuse me, my friend. In my country we never eat with our jackets on. Take off your jacket so that we can get down to business."

Turtle took a great mouthful of food and started chewing. In a few minutes there wouldn't be anything left. Spider was aching all over with hunger. Turtle took another mouthful. So Spider wriggled out of his coat and grabbed at the food. But without the pebbles he was so light again that he popped right up to the top of the water.

People always say that one good meal deserves another.

Harold Courlander: "Hungry Spider and the Turtle",
from *The Cow-Tail Switch and Other West African Stories*.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A very special thank you is due to the many individuals who provided invaluable assistance in the production of this report. Literally a cast of thousands was involved in the development, administration, scoring, analysis, writing, reviewing, and reporting of the 1994 Trial State Assessment in reading. These individuals contributed their expertise, energy, and creativity to help make the NAEP reading assessment a success. Most importantly, NAEP is grateful to the students and school staff who participated in the Trial State Assessment.

The design, development, analysis, and reporting of the 1994 Trial State Assessment was a continuation of the collaborative effort that began in 1989 among staff from State Education Agencies, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Educational Testing Service (ETS), Westat, and National Computer Systems (NCS). The Trial State Assessment Program continued to benefit from the contributions of hundreds of individuals at the state and local levels — governors, chief state school officers, state and district test directors, state coordinators, and district administrators — who provided their wisdom, experience, and hard work.

The 1990, 1992 and 1994 Trial State Assessments were funded through NCES by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education. The NCES staff — particularly Jeanne Griffith, Gary Phillips, Sheida White, Peggy Carr, Sharif Shakrani, Stephen Gorman, Sue Ahmed, Maureen Treacy, and Sahar Akhtar — worked closely and collegially with ETS, Westat, and NCS staff and played a crucial role in all aspects of the program. The 1994 NAEP assessments and reports benefitted from the consistent support and guidance of Emerson Elliott, the past Commissioner of NCES.

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The NAEP project at ETS is directed by Paul Williams and resides in the Center for the Assessment of Educational Progress (CAEP) managed by Archie Lapointe and Paul Williams. Steve Lazer managed the test development activities, and Jay Campbell and Patricia Donahue worked with the Reading Item Development committee to develop the assessment instruments. John Barone managed the data analysis activities; Jules Goodison and John Olson, the operational aspects; Clyde Reese and Karen Miller, reporting activities; and John Olson, state services and technical assistance. Statistical and psychometric activities were led by John Mazzeo, with consultation from Eugene Johnson. Sampling and data collection

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The large number of states and territories participating in the Trial State Assessment provided many challenges, including the need to develop different reports that are customized for each of the participating jurisdictions based on its characteristics and the results of its assessed students. To meet this challenge, a computerized report-generation system was employed that created text, tables, and graphics for each jurisdiction's unique report. This system, created by Jennifer Nelson, was designed to take advantage of mainframe computer speed and accuracy for the data computations, interfaced with high-quality text formatting and graphical output procedures. Laura Jerry led the computer-based development of the reading report. John Mazzeo and Nancy Allen oversaw the analyses for the reports, with significant input from Steve Isham. James Carlson, Hua Hua Chang, John Donoghue, John Ferris, David Freund, Frank Jenkins, Bruce Kaplan, Edward Kulick, Phillip Leung, Jo-lin Liang, Eiji Muraki, Craig Pizzuti and Spencer Swinton collaborated to generate the data, conduct the analyses, and check the results. Al Rogers developed and generated the maps.

Stephen Koffler, Jay Campbell, and John Mazzeo wrote the text for the report. Laura Jerry and Karen Miller coordinated the quality control and checking of the reports. Mary Michaels and Sharon Johnson were responsible for coordinating the cover design and final production of the reports. Finally, a special thanks is also due to the numerous reviewers, internal and external, who suggested improvements to the reports, and the individuals who thoroughly checked the data, text, tables, and maps.

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